

The Federation of Heathfield and St Francis Schools



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Executive Headteacher
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NON STATUTORY POLICY

The Federation of Heathfield and St Francis Schools Communication with Parents and Carers Policy

Policy by: Rachel Weldon, Executive Headteacher

Date: October 2020

Signed: 
Chair of Governors: Chris Mouat

To be reviewed: Biennially

Introduction

The Federation of Heathfield and St Francis Schools believe that positive communication between parents and carers and our schools is vital to enable the very best outcomes for our pupils to be achieved. We also believe it is important to ensure that full and frank information is shared with parents and carers at all times. At Heathfield and St Francis we pride ourselves on ensuring we achieve this by offering a range of methods by which parents and carers can communicate with us.

Key Areas of Communication

There are important areas in which information should be provided. These include:

- communication initiated by the class teacher, office staff, pastoral staff, speech therapists or school nurse (at St Francis) regarding:
 - general school activities;
 - particular concerns involving a pupil;
 - achievements involving a pupil;
 - illness and injury;
 - particular activities regarding any one pupil;
 - pupil progress and attainment;
 - pupil travel information; and
 - routine information before the pupil joins the school.

Methods of Communication

The methods by which information is presently communicated include:

1. From school to parents and carers:
 - Annual Review meeting
 - Annual Review reports
 - End of Year Report
 - Twice yearly parent/carers consultations.
 - Details on entry – letter, handbook and consent details
 - Email
 - Telephone calls
 - Meetings in school and virtual
 - Text messaging service
 - Internet – school websites

- Home to school link books
 - Newsletters
 - Occasional letters regarding specific events
2. From parents and carers to school:
- Contribution to Annual Review reports
 - Email
 - Letters
 - Home to school link books
 - Telephone calls
 - Meetings in school
3. From parents and carers to parents and carers:
- Telephone calls
 - Parent workshops
 - Coffee mornings
 - End of term celebrations / events

Protocols for Meetings

Ordinarily, meetings will be arranged well in advance at mutually convenient times. However, should a parent or carer arrive at either school wishing to speak urgently about a particular issue, staff will do all that is reasonable to accommodate this.

Records of correspondence between the federation and parents and carers from telephone calls, emails and meetings are maintained and filed confidentially and in line with current legislation. See appendix 1 for a useful template to use for face to face meetings.

Behaviour of all Stakeholders

Positive and respectful communication is of high importance to our federation. This extends to all stakeholders e.g. staff, parents and carers, pupils and the wider community. Anyone entering our schools should feel safe to do so. Adults in the federation community have a responsibility to ensure they demonstrate dignity and respect towards others.

It is of paramount importance that all stakeholders are responsible for their own behaviours in the federation. Below are examples of what we mean by this.

- All stakeholders are expected to speak to each other with respect. Shouting or aggressive tones are not acceptable. If a stakeholder displays anger or aggression to another

member of the federation community, they may be asked to remove themselves from the building. In certain cases, the Police may be called.

- If a stakeholder has a confrontational manner during a telephone conversation with another member of the federation community, it may be necessary for the call to be put on speaker phone and another staff member listen in. If this does happen the stakeholder will be made aware. The telephone conversation may also be politely terminated.
- All stakeholders are expected, when communicating in writing, to do so in a respectful manner and to not make personal or derogatory comments about any other stakeholder.
- All stakeholders are expected to be respectful of fellow stakeholders if publishing on social networks. e.g. Facebook, Twitter. This includes not writing comments that others would find upsetting or offensive. We ask that parents and carers who are unhappy about any aspect of their child's education to make contact with the federation or use the Complaints Policy (can be found on the federation's website).
- All stakeholders will treat our pupils with the utmost respect at all times.
- Staff should not be asked to speak about another parent's or carer's child. The staff of the federation will respect your child's right to privacy; therefore, it is asked that parents and carers respect other children's rights to privacy.
- When stakeholders meet, it is important to respect that the time of the meetings should be kept to a reasonable amount of time. Timings of meetings should be agreed beforehand and these should be respected.

Social Networking Sites/Blogs

Staff are not permitted to communicate with parents and carers or pupils via social networking sites (such as Facebook) or accept them as their 'friends'. This is part of our safeguarding procedures to protect pupils and staff.

This does not apply to the federation's own Facebook page, which is monitored and is intended to facilitate communication with all stakeholders and supporters of the federation.

Conclusion

The Federation of Heathfield and St Francis Schools will aim to keep parents and carers informed at all times regarding events that may affect their child. It is important that the federation works in a spirit of co-operation with parents and carers to ensure a successful federation experience for each pupil.

In order to maximise the time spent with pupils we politely request that emails and phone calls to staff are kept to a minimum and that where possible and in the first instance, correspondence is with the class teacher for any queries regarding learning. In addition, our admin team are able to answer questions of a more operational nature. Senior members of staff are also available should your correspondence require this. The admin team will pass on any messages during the school day.

Appendix 1

MEETING OUTCOMES

Present:

Date:

Time:

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| Purpose of meeting |
| |
| Discussion / Outcomes / Actions |
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Notes taken by